Weapons in outer space

*53. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have exhorted the world community, particularly its neighbouring countries, to keep the outer space free of weapons;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the occasion that prompted India to make such an exhortation; and

(c) what are the responses, if any, received in this regard from different countries?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government has been participating in all the relevant international forums for promoting peaceful uses of outer space besides being closely engaged with the multilateral effort towards keeping outer free of weapons. India's traditional position on non-weaponisation of outer space has been reiterated in these forums.

(c) Recent debates in the relevant multilateral forums in Vienna and Geneva have provided the opportunity for many States to reiterate their commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space. Government continues to monitor developments on this subject.

Collection of emigration fund

*54. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that people going abroad, particularly to Gulf countries, for job have to deposit emigration fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof and when this practice was started;

(c) what is the amount so far collected on this account;

(d) whether this fund has been utilised to help migrant Indian labour facing any difficulties abroad and for the rehabilitation of such people who have returned from abroad; and